


NAVIGATION AND VESSEL INSPECTION CIRCULAR NO. 10-85
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Subj: Oversight of Technical and Administrative Aspects of Load Line Assignment

1. PURPOSE. The purpose of this Circular is to describe activities of the Coast Guard in overseeing technical and administrative actions by load line assigning and issuing authorities.
2. DISCUSSION.
 - a. Parts 42 through 46 of Title 46 of the Code of Federal Regulations require certain U. S. flag vessels, and certain foreign flag vessels while in U. S. jurisdictional waters, to have load lines. The authority to assign load lines and issue load line certificates has been delegated to recognized ship classification societies. The Coast Guard administers the load line regulations by ensuring that the delegated responsibilities are carried out in accordance with established standards and procedures, and that they are applied in an equitable and consistent manner to all vessels receiving a load line.
 - b. The general technical functions performed by the load line assigning authorities are as follows:
 - (1) Freeboard Calculations. The assigning authorities determine the freeboard for each vessel based on standards in the regulations and a determination of adequate stability, strength, and if applicable, subdivision of the vessel.
 - (2) Conditions of Assignment. The assigning authorities use a record of conditions of assignment to check the watertight integrity of the hull, superstructures, vent heights, overboard discharges, closures, and other conditions required for load line assignment. A copy of the record must be kept on board and is valid for the life of the vessel provided no changes are made to the vessel.
 - (3) Strength Review. The assigning authorities use their published standards for classification as a basis for strength review for load line. Items which are reviewed for load line include external structure including plating and associated framing of the hull and superstructure, and longitudinal strength.
 - (4) Stability and Subdivision Approval. In most cases the stability review is conducted by the Coast Guard. Some stability reviews have been delegated to the American Bureau of Shipping under NVIC 3-84. The freeboard assignment must correspond to the approved maximum draft in the vessel's stability letter or stability booklet. The assigning authorities review subdivision calculations for B-60 and B-100 freeboard S.
 - c. The assigning authorities send copies of the following documents to the Commandant (G-MTH):
 - (1) provisional and full term load line certificates (46 CFR 42.07-35(f))

- (2) initial and periodical survey and inspection reports including record of conditions of assignment (46 CFR 42.07-35(g))
 - (3) freeboard calculation summaries (46 CFR 42.07-35(f))
 - d. The assigning authorities provide copies of the following documents to be maintained on board each vessel:
 - (1) provisional and full term load line certificates (46 CFR 42.09-1(c))
 - (2) initial and periodical survey and inspection reports including record of conditions of assignment (46 CFR 42.09-1(c))
- 3. ACTION. The Commandant (G-MTH) will maintain technical and administrative oversight of load line assigning authorities through periodic visits to spot check records and files. Load line assigning authorities will file copies of certificates, calculations, and other non-bulky documents in their designated office in the United States. Copies of bulky items, such as plans and stability manuals need not be filed in the United States; however, such information must be made available for review in the United States within a reasonable time upon request of the Commandant (G-MTH). The Commandant (G-MTH) may request that specific information, copies of plans, calculations, and data be sent to Coast Guard Headquarters for review and filing. Any of the following load line oversight actions may be taken by the Coast Guard for selected vessels:
 - a. Commandant (G-MTH) will:
 - (1) review freeboard calculations for completeness and accuracy;
 - (2) examine records of conditions of assignment;
 - (3) review load line certificates for completeness and accuracy;
 - (4) notify assigning authorities of any deficiencies found as a result of load line oversight reviews.
 - b. Coast Guard Marine Safety Center will:
 - (1) at the request of Commandant (G-MTH),
 - (a) review hull structure plans and strength calculations;
 - (b) review stability and subdivision calculations;
 - (2) notify Commandant (G-MTH) of any deficiencies found as a result of load line oversight reviews.
 - c. Officers in Charge, Marine Inspection will as directed by Commandant (G-MTH) for those vessels selected for technical oversight:
 - (1) verify that documents in paragraph 2.d. of this Circular are on board the vessel;

- (2) verify that stability information referenced on the load line certificate is on board the vessel;
- (3) verify that the vessel arrangements agree with the record of conditions of assignment report;
- (4) verify hull load line markings indicated on the load line certificate.
- (5) Notify Commandant (G-MTH) of any administrative deficiencies found as a result of the load line oversight inspection.


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